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The LABOUR ORGANISER

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A Timely Warning to All
in the Party—

**BEWARE A
SNAP
ELECTION!**

Also—

Arthur Woodburn, M.P.

on

**"My Ideal Election
Set-Up"**

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IT COULD BE A SNAP ELECTION

It is now apparent that the Conservative Party is determined to have an election this year at a time convenient to, and known only to, themselves. Despite the speeches of the Prime Minister on democracy, the public interests in the election are of secondary importance to those of the Party he leads. The hard-faced men who control the Tory machine are in the saddle, and the Prime Minister, absorbed in his duties as Minister of Defence, is giving way before them, apparently without a struggle.

The Parliamentary Electors (War Time Registration) Act, 1943, provided machinery for the compilation of an up-to-date Register for the first post-war General Election. It ensured a period of 7½ weeks between the Royal Proclamation and Polling Day, five weeks of which would be needed for the printing of the Register. Incidentally, the Act created a guarantee against a snap election and ensured sufficient time for the fullest consultation between candidates and the electorate. The Act was further a safeguard against a stunt election, because no stunt can out-live an election period of 7½ weeks.

The good work of the Act of 1943 is to be eliminated for any practical General Election in 1945. The publi-

cation of the Fixed Registers, mentioned in another article in this issue, enables the Government to dissolve Parliament without notice, and to fix the poll 17 days thereafter.

Apparently the promoters of the new Bill seem blind to the interests of the hundreds of soldiers who have been selected as Parliamentary candidates, and who may find it extremely difficult to reach their constituencies in time for an effective contest. The electorate, a great part of which is absolutely new, is to be given little or no opportunity of closely scrutinising the programmes of the political parties.

Warning has been given: Constituency Labour Parties must accept the warning as a Call to Arms. Its members must drop other activities and interests and put the whole of their time into Labour Party work, for the result of the next electoral contest will decide the future well-being of Britain and the world.

Fortunately, the National Executive Committee, the Regional Councils, the Federations and many Constituency Parties, have not been idle. The preliminary work of the past year provides a foundation on which to build. There is very much more to be done, and guidance will reach the Movement at fairly rapid intervals. There must be a real eagerness to act.

An experienced campaigner's plan for "getting the vote out"

How I'd Run a 1945 Election

By ARTHUR WOODBURN, M.P.

I have had many and varied experiences of elections. As a youngster I was busy with my elders in the Committee Rooms of the Liberals during the khaki election of the Boer War. During all the elections after the last war I took an active part. Before I myself was a candidate, during every election I spoke in anything up to six different constituencies, some town and others country.

During my own campaign in 1929, in what its Member claimed to be the best Tory seat in Britain—South Edinburgh—our numbers were so small that we had all to do many jobs. We ran a meeting in a school once every week for the six months preceding the poll. There was a 5/- advert., 1,000 handbills for 5/- and 5/- for a schoolroom, and we took collections which worked their way up from about 10/- to over £2. Our little group delivered the 1,000 bills round the area of the school the day before the meeting and we thus reached a different section of the people every week.

We sent a report to the press, with an exposition of some part of Labour's policy, which reached about 30,000 people. We just saved our deposit. To raise the money we had to run jumble sales, and, as my car was the only transport, I had to collect furniture and junk of all kinds to take to the hall. I had to help the election agent, doing most of his correspondence, paint posters, write press reports, etc. As a kind of spare-time job I was the candidate on the meeting night. But it was a great fight pioneering in virgin Tory territory.

When I became Scottish Secretary of the Labour Party I became responsible for all by-elections, and I soon found that the only generally satisfactory way was for me to be the election agent. In most cases I had to improvise machinery. We started the by-election in East Fife—about which the novel "Magnus Merriman" was written by Eric Linklater—with five workers. In a fortnight we had eight, but by the end we had probably 50 to 100.

In no case do I recall there being any real election machinery, so I began to learn how to build from scratch, which I expect will be the position of many readers of *Labour Organiser*.

It would be interesting to recount these experiences and how I learned from both friends and opponents, but it will be more useful to suggest a plan for others to follow, varied according to their local conditions.

If I were asked to get a constituency ready for an election in the course of 1945 I should begin NOW. I should look round the constituency for the most able people I knew who were connected with or sympathetic to Labour. I should then invite them personally to meet me—either by interview or by inviting them to a little social gathering, where they could meet the candidate or M.P. I should then invite them to assist in preparing the election machinery to ensure the maximum vote for Labour at the next election. Assuming that I found a number capable and willing to undertake responsibility and ready to give some time to the work, I should allocate them to their duties.

Five Posts

1. *Election Treasurer* would be, probably, the Party Treasurer.
2. *Canvasser Organiser*, with deputies in charge of *Registration*, *Canvasser Recruitment*, *Membership Recruitment*.
3. *Envelope Organiser*, with deputies charged with *Envelope Addressing*, *Envelope Filling*.
4. *Meetings Organiser*, with deputies for: (a) *Publicity through Press Reports, Posters, Leaflet Delivery*. (b) *Platform Convener* responsible for decoration, lay-out and general efficiency of platform arrangements. (c) *Stewards Convener* responsible for conduct of doorkeepers, ushers, etc., and collection. (d) *Literature Convener* responsible for lay-out of stall and distribution of sellers. (e) *Social Secretary* responsible for looking after speakers, guests, hospitality, etc. (f) *Outdoor Meetings Organiser* with his staff.

5. *Cars Organiser*, to recruit and organise car service.

We should have periodic staff meetings to discuss plans and report progress.

All of us would then proceed to recruit our staffs. I, as election agent, would try to find clerical assistance for my Central Committee Room—one or more good typists, for whom we should require typewriters—and several capable clerks, one of whom would require to be in charge of cash should the Treasurer not be free for full-time duties during the election. I should require to look out for good Committee Rooms as prominent a place as possible both for convenience and publicity purposes.

In each area my sub-agents would require to build up a similar organisation.

No Sentiment

By starting now I should test out those who were reliable and those who failed in their duties and replace them by others. There ought to be no sentiment about this, and the Party should support the Election Agent in his work.

We need good chairmen for our meetings and good speakers to support the candidate.

In a scattered constituency I have found the best arrangement to work with a small but reliable team of speakers. About six good speakers should be enough to cover all the meetings normally possible. Not more than three speakers should be on any programme unless on very exceptional occasions. Much the same applies to chairmen. They should rather be efficient than plentiful.

If we can find people with these qualifications in their normal occupations, use them as it is quicker than starting to train people afresh. If not available, then we have to provide training for those who are willing to act. This is, fortunately, free for most workers. The National Council of Labour Colleges, in accordance with its scheme with most Trade Unions, provides free of charge—

(a) Lecture notes for classes.

(b) Free correspondence courses.

The subjects which would help us in our work would be Public Speaking and Chairmanship, Socialism, Post-

War Reconstruction Problems, Finance, all helpful for speakers.

Electioneering, English and Article Writing, which provides training in work for elections.

Those with artistic bents can get training in art at Local Authority art schools, where they might also recruit others to give a practical turn to their skill in doing posters, etc.

Up to Candidate

All this is behind the candidate, who must rise to the occasion and justify the confidence placed in him. If he has any defects he ought to try to make them good. For example, a man might be very able and yet fail in the view of fastidious electors if he makes unnecessary slips in grammar. With an English course available, this is inexcusable.

Local Government candidates can get courses on their subject, and Parliamentary candidates must be no less well informed than their supporting speakers. None of us know about politics by instinct. Even M.P.s have difficulty in keeping pace with the ramifications of Government and its problems. To be an efficient candidate means hard work—and hard work on the part of a candidate inspires others. There is room for all, and the first and last business of an election organiser is to have work ready for all willing workers; to seek out the best workers and convince the electors that our efficiency in running the election gives prima facie justification for believing that we can run the country.

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AROUND THE PARTIES

Cannock's "Baby" Shows How

In the membership drive in Cannock Division pride of place must be given to the youngest Party, the Penn and St. Philip's Labour Party. This lively organisation has in two months gained an individual membership of over thirty new members. Longer-established Parties will have to get a move on or find themselves lagging behind this bonny baby.

HELPING VOTERS

Proposals now under consideration to render service to all Constituency Parties in Leeds City are as follows:—

- (a) That the Party Office should act as a clearing house for the names and addresses of electors who have removed from the premises for which they were registered.
- (b) That there should be an attempt to exchange national speakers and local candidates to enable an effective staffing of election meetings.
- (c) That an attempt should be made to conduct a poster campaign for the whole of the city.
- (d) That consideration should be given to the production of an illustrated propaganda sheet.
- (e) That enquiries be made about the possibility of employing a cinema propaganda van during the campaign.

INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS

The Third International Brains Trust, organised by South Stanmore (Harrow) had as members Mr. Desmond Thakle, a West African economist; Mr. G. Marik, a Sikh, and Mr. L. G. Key, from Australia.

South Stanmore is certainly giving its electorate an insight into overseas problems.

ORGANISING VICTORY

North Tottenham Labour Party is starting a class on Organisation and

Elections in January. This well-organised constituency is not taking the 1945 "Trial of Strength" lightly. Both Party and electorate have much to learn following the lapse of time since 1935.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Much enterprise is displayed by the Bethnal Green North-East Labour Party in its Christmas Message to the electors. There are articles by Dan Chater, M.P., Thomas Dawson, L.C.C., Sir William Deeds, L.C.C., Councillor H. E. Tate, J.P., the Agent, and Councillor H. P. Wilson, the Party chairman. We commend the Party for propaganda intelligently conveyed to the electors.

NEW PARTIES

The organisation of new Local Labour Parties are reported from Buckfastleigh (Totnes), Canterbury and Waltham (Canterbury) and Boreham Wood (St. Albans).

BEARING FRUIT

Isle of Ely, that very difficult constituency in the Eastern Counties, is responding to interest in the forthcoming General Election. At Wisbech, in the heart of the fruit-growing area, following a public address by Wilfred Young, twenty-one people remained behind to form a new Local Labour Party. The new secretary is Miss A. V. Barnes.

FARMERS LISTEN

Although Tamworth Division is due for division as an abnormal constituency, the Constituency Party is not waiting on events. With the co-operation of Mr. Harrison, of the Agricultural Workers' Union, fifty people turned up at Coleshill to form a new Local Labour Party. Harry Wickham eloquently put over the Party's case.

(Continued on Page 13)



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"BE YOURSELF" WHEN SPEAKING

A series of articles to help platform aspirants, by Harold Croft

(V) Platform Manner

After a first effort in public a speaker should begin to give a little attention to his demeanour and appearance on the platform and try to correct any "questionable" faults. I use this phrase because the question as to "faults" is related to the individual person. Something that is really a fault in one person may be an attractive idiosyncrasy in another speaker. For instance, a lounging attitude on the platform might easily irritate an audience and put them against a speaker, whereas in the case of another speaker the lounging attitude would be so much an engaging and charming characteristic that an audience would be intrigued by it. And here a moral can be inserted—"Don't copy another speaker's attitudes." Be natural. The problem, then, is to correct any faults that arise from carelessness, inattention or ignorance.

Some general hints can be given, rather to suggest a little discipline of one's self than to be instructions.

Don't Be Stiff

STANCE.—Stand upright on both feet, not in a stiff attitude, but in a comfortable position for yourself. It is easy when speaking from behind a table and partly resting on it with the hands, to stand on one foot and let the other support itself loosely. Sometimes the visual effect for the audience is slightly funny. I once had to correct a novice who, in the stress of speaking, changed at times so rapidly from one foot to the other than it gave a slight impression of dancing steps. Sometimes an earnest speaker will bend the body forward and swing the arms out as if to reach or encompass the audience. A momentary posture of this kind may be effective, but, if it persists, I am sure an audience would tire of the continuous strained pose. I think there is a principle that any change from the normal posture should be momentary for effect, otherwise it must pall on an audience. If a speaker stretches out one hand and vigorously bangs on it with the other, this is effective as a crescendo of emphasis, but it is monotonous and artificial if persisted in all through an argument. Beware of leaning too long on a table or on the back of a chair. The incidental posture is

of no consequence as a fault, but, if continued, it gives too much an impression of amateurishness or casualness.

Those Hands

HANDS.—Some speakers give an impression of being uncomfortable over their hands. They appear not to know what to do with them. To stand with the arms and hands rigidly down and extended looks affected or stiff, though if the arms hang loosely and the hands are lightly closed the effect can be quite natural. To fumble with a watch chain or buttons is irritating to the audience. If a speaker is conscious of the "hands" perhaps the safest course is to clasp them lightly in front, and this easiness will almost automatically cause the speaker to unclasp the hands occasionally in a gentle gesture at moments of slight animation of speech.

Natural Gestures

GESTURE.—Most books on speaking advise that speakers should discipline themselves and be very sparing of gesture. In general, the advice is good, but temperament has to be considered. I have, in adjudicating at Speakers' Forums, often had to suggest to novices that a little more gesture would improve their platform appeal. In these cases the speakers had remained still during the delivery of their speeches, and only involuntarily made a facial or hand gesture.

There is a difference between what might be termed simple natural gestures—a lighting up of the countenance or a motion of the hand—which are normal and to be encouraged, and the gestures of emphasis which arise from the stress or emotion of the speakers and can so quickly become too excitable or even grotesque. Spluttering at the mouth, grimacing, incessant waving of the arms, banging the fists, jumping and jerky movements of the body, all are evidences of a lack of disciplined control.

One can "let one's self go" without spoiling the force of appeal by a riot of physical contortions and extravagant emphasis. Gesture is powerful when reasonably controlled by the brain. It is the anarchy of gesture which is a grave fault. The

(Continued on page 13)

A Modern Cobbett Rides through Sussex and Learns—

Good News of Battle

By JOHN OXFORD

With a full moon to light my way and a hard frost to chill my bones, I turned my face towards the Star Inn, at Battle. The ruins of Battle Abbey Gateway loomed like a vast charcoal etching against the night sky. I saw also the ruins of little homes, for Sussex has known a later visitation 'gainst which the events of 1066 would seem but the play of village boys!

The Star Inn and the Abbey ruins are not the only attractions of old-world Battle. Once upon a time—so the story goes—a parson, whose dust has mingled with the rich Sussex earth, presented the God-fearing citizens with a Parish Hall.

No Politics

He, being a man of peace, and seeing that the fruity arguments 'twixt Whigs and Tories did often lead to strong words and stronger blows, made a condition of his gift that politics should not be talked therein.

Behold also a monument to Learning which serves the children of the good people of Battle—to wit, the village school. This building, alas, has no "black-out" and but one curtain which serves only to divide the two classes, one from the other, whilst lessons are in progress. A humble searcher for Socialism must, therefore, take himself to an upper room at the Star, there to meet the comrades.

Twenty-six good men and true (and one good woman—Mistress Secretary) sat round on high-backed chairs, the seats of which showed evidence of that high-polish obtained through the shufflings of generations of corduroy.

Plain Folks

These were men of plain and simple speech, whom I liked well; men who wrestled with soil and weather; craftsmen in wood, brick and stone. They talked of fields and harvests, and then of Party rules, of forming a Trades Council, and of plans for that new Sussex and England which must arise when her sons come home from across the water.

Was this 1945 or had time slipped backwards? Was this a gathering of

Chartists or a Sussex version of Tolpuddle?

Business over—out into the night again. For some a homeward tramp of well-nigh eight long miles. I had good companions on my homeward road—Bill Sargent and Ron. Evernden. A stoat rushed out across our path. Shadows came and went. Did we see a band of Norman horsemen riding over yonder hill?

So, happy to bed, for we had shared the joy and travails of pioneers!

Trade Unions MUST be in Politics

From "The Clerk" we republish an extract from an article from William Elger, the General President, who is also the Secretary of the Scottish T.U.C. It is a typical example of Elger's ability to condense his case.

"No trade union can (or does) abstain from politics. Political action has always been, is, and always must be, one of the normal functions of trade unionism. The unions *must* take a prominent part in promoting, enforcing, or resisting all kinds of legislation affecting education, sanitation, factories, mines, railways, shipping, shops, offices, industrial arbitration, wages regulation, etc. The unions cannot properly carry out their *industrial* objects without bringing this influence to bear upon the supreme legislative authority — Parliament. Moreover, trade unionists do not by their act of joining a union, forfeit their rights (and obligations) as citizens, and as citizens they have the right (and obligation) to influence Parliament in such matters as housing, social security, international relations, and the whole range of questions that concern Town and County Councils."

Changes in Party Constitution

(Continued from Page 9)

duly endorsed Parliamentary candidates appointed by Constituency Parties, other than those who have selected them for an election, has led to some trouble. This will be eliminated in future by the amendment.

What Conference Amendments Mean

Changes in Party Constitution

The Annual Party Conference, following a review of the Party Constitution by the National Executive Committee, gave consideration to proposed changes in the Party Constitution suggested by the Committee, and to amendments sent in by affiliated organisations. The amendments adopted by the Conference were few, and some of them were merely verbal in character.

The following, however, call for mention:—

CLAUSE VI. PARTY CONFERENCE

Many affiliated organisations, because of their small membership, have been restricted to the appointment of one delegate. Occasionally, this delegate has been nominated for and elected to a seat on the National Executive Committee. The affiliated organisation concerned has, therefore, felt bound to renew the same delegate's appointment year after year, and has, thereby prevented other members from sharing in the experiences of an Annual Party Conference. The Conference has now decided that all affiliated organisations may, in subsequent years following on the election of such a delegate to the National Executive Committee, appoint an additional delegate provided they continue to nominate the original delegate for election to the National Executive Committee, and provided further, that such delegate continues to be qualified.

The new provision will find a place in the circular convening the Annual Party Conference.

CLAUSE X. AFFILIATION AND MEMBERSHIP FEES

The Conference approved of an amendment to this clause fixing a minimum Membership Fee of sixpence per month. This will come into operation from 1st January, 1945. Whilst a small number of objections to this amendment were received in correspondence, and whilst some objection was expressed against it in the Conference discussion, the amendment has been generally welcomed throughout the Party.

Some Parties have assumed that the amendment interferes with local autonomy, but, on reflection, it will be found that this is only partially true.

Under the Constitution, an individual becomes a member of the Party itself. For Organisational purposes they are enrolled in Constituency Labour Parties. This being the case, the Annual Party Conference has the same Constitutional rights to fix Individual Membership Fees as it has to fix the fees of affiliated organisations. It will be remembered, too, that until 1929 the Party Constitution did contain a minimum Individual Membership Fee of one shilling per annum in the case of men and sixpence per annum in the case of women. Those minima were only withdrawn from the Party Constitution to facilitate, through the Parties, a rise in contributions to one penny per week. In the opinion of a majority of Constituency Labour Parties, as represented to National Executive Committee representatives in their tours of the country, and in much correspondence, it had become clear that a new minimum Individual Membership Fee should be re-introduced into the Constitution in order to facilitate an increase in Individual Membership contributions to a higher level. The proposal of the National Executive Committee is, therefore, not an arbitrary inroad into the local autonomy of Constituency Labour Parties, but a response made to repeated demands.

STANDING ORDER 4, SECTION 3. ELECTION OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

This Section needed a verbal alteration to make it clear that Members of Parliament and duly endorsed candidates, except when they are appointed as delegates by Constituency Labour Parties who have selected them as Parliamentary candidates, must fulfil the same residential qualifications as other delegates appointed by Constituency Labour Parties. The old wording was found not to be exactly watertight, and a refusal by the Conference Arrangements Committee to accept as delegates Members of Parliament and

(Continued on previous page)

ELECTORAL LAW:

Any Suggestions?

The Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Scotland have appointed the following Committee to consider Election Law Reforms:—

- Sir Cecil Carr (Counsel to the Speaker), *Chairman*.
 Sir Rowland Evans (Lib. Nat. Organisation).
 Mr. Andrew Hamilton (Sheriff Clerk, Cupar, Fife).
 Mr. William Hansford (Scottish Home Department).
 Mr. Raymond Jones (Sec. and Chief Agent, Lib. Cen. Association).
 Mr. William Kerr (Town Clerk, Glasgow).
 Mr. H. S. Martin (Clerk of the Peace and County Council for East Sussex).
 Sir Cecil Oakes (Clerk of the Peace and County Council for East Suffolk).
 Mr. G. R. Shepherd (Nat. Agent of the Labour Party).
 Mr. G. J. Sheriff (County Clerk of Stirling).
 Mr. Dudley Sorrell (Town Clerk, Hackney).
 Mr. E. W. Tame (Town Clerk, Birkenhead).
 Sir Robert Topping (Gen. Director, Cons. Central Officer).

The terms of reference are below:—

To consider

- (1) In what respects
 - (a) the law relating to corrupt and illegal practices at Parliamentary elections,
 - (b) the provisions of the Ballot Act, 1872, relating to the conduct of the poll and the counting of votes at such elections, and
 - (c) the law relating to the like matters at local elections, should be amended with a view to rendering the law relating to those matters more suitable to present-day requirements;
- (2) the recommendations of the Speaker's Conference relating to the use of schools and halls for election meetings and to broad-casting;

and to make recommendations thereon.

The National Agent invites information and suggestions for his consideration.

LABOUR & CO-OPERATIVE PARLIAMENTARY AGENT

Applications are invited for the position of full-time Agent for the Bristol North Parliamentary Constituency. Applicants to have experience in the organisation of a Parliamentary Division and the conduct of Parliamentary and Municipal Elections.

Salary according to scale.

Applications to be addressed to Councillor H. F. Rowat, 6, Glen Park, Eastville, Bristol, 5, endorsed "Parliamentary Agent."

ELECTION AGENT

Either full-time or part-time until the General Election, and then full-time for four weeks during the election.

Apply, Kingston Divisional Labour Party. Sec., J. H. Cocks, 14, Hillbrow, New Malden, Surrey.

What Durham Has Done

Joe Foster has compiled a record of progress in Labour representation on the Durham County Council. From that we gather a real sense of power. In 1919 there were forty Labour councillors and eight aldermen, thirty-four Opposition councillors with seventeen aldermen. In 1937, when the last contest took place, Labour had sixty-five councillors and twenty-nine aldermen, whereas the Opposition had been reduced to twenty-three councillors and no aldermen.

Joe Foster would be first to tell you that there is no magic in the transformation. All has been accomplished by hard and tireless work.

Correspondence Corner

A Junior Labour Party?

To the Editor.

DEAR SIR,—Is it not possible to form a Junior Labour Party for boys and girls of my own age (16) in view of the present-day trend towards a firmer understanding of present-day politics by the youth of Britain? I have found that many young people are taking a growing interest in politics—aroused more often than not by discussions at youth clubs and organisations. Many of them have willingly devoted their time to their country, by so doing arousing the admiration and gratitude of their older citizens. They know what they are fighting for and yet have no channels in which to direct their train of thoughts. I consider that the Labour Party is the only Party that could meet with the demand of the young people satisfactorily and bring them to the forefront in British politics.

I remain, Sir,

Yours sincerely,

P.T.N.

Leyton, E.10.

"CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS"

Will readers who can spare their copies of the above book kindly send them to the Registrar of Study Courses as copies are most urgently needed? A remittance of 3/- per copy will be immediately forwarded.

OCTOBER "LABOUR ORGANISER"

Copies are urgently required by Head Office. Will Parties or readers respond? Remittance will be forwarded.

NORTH, Coun. Frank Mitchell; RICHMOND, Mr. R. Whitty; EASTBOURNE, Mr. Eric Hunt; BARKSTON ASH, Mr. C. J. Hurley; MIDDLESBROUGH, Dr. C. E. M. Joad; CARDIFF CENTRAL, Mr. John Ramage.

More Candidates Endorsed

Here is a list of additional candidates endorsed by the N.E.C. at its meetings on 22nd November and 8th December, 1944:—

WINDSOR, Miss Marjorie Nicholson; ALTRINCHAM, Mr. M. C. Joseph; BIRKENHEAD WEST, Mr. W. J. Tudor; TORQUAY, Mr. George Cornes. STRATFORD, Mr. Henry R. Nicholls; PORTSMOUTH NORTH, Major D. W. T. Bruce; FAVERSHAM, Mr. Percy L. Wells; LIVERPOOL (WAVERTREE), Mr. P. H. W. Coudry; SALFORD SOUTH, Mr. Edward A. Hardy; WIDNES, Comdr. C. S. Shawcross, R.N.V.R.; GRIMSBY, Major K. G. Younger; FINSBURY, Mr. J. F. F. Platts-Mills; HAMMERSMITH NORTH, Ald. W. H. Church; HOLBORN, Miss Irene Marcouse; PADDINGTON SOUTH, Major Charles Wegg-Prosser; HORNSEY, Mr. W. G. Fiske; WOOD GREEN AND SOUTHGATE, Signalman W. A. Vant; HEXHAM, Mr. Harold Smith; WANSBECK, Mr. Alfred Robens; WOLVERHAMPTON WEST, Mr. H. D. Hughes; WIMBLEDON, Mr. A. M. F. Palmer; EAST GRINSTEAD, Mr. D. G. Packham; BIRMINGHAM (ASTON), Major Woodrow Wyatt; DERITEND, Mr. Fred Longden; KING'S NORTON, Capt. A. Raymond Blackburn; LADYWOOD, Mr. V. F. Yates; MOSELEY, Mr. Henry C. Osborne; YARDLEY, Mr. Wesley Perrins; SALISBURY, Brig. John A. L. Caunter; ELLAND, Mr. Fredk. A. Cobb; SOWERBY, Mr. J. Wm. Belcher; ANGLESEY, Mr. Cledwyn Hughes; FLINTSHIRE, Miss Eirene Lloyd Jones; NORTH LANARK, Miss Margaret Herbi-son.

Candidates Withdrawn

MACCLESFIELD, Mr. C. T. Douthwaite, J.P.; BELPER, Mr. George Dallas; STOCKTON, Mr. J. Erskine Harper; HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Mr. A. W. Harper; MANCHESTER (EXCHANGE), Mr. R. McKeon; CLITHEROE, Mr. S. Shaw; GRANTHAM, Mr. M. W. Moore; LEWIS- HAM EAST, Mr. Tom Crawford; YARMOUTH, Mr. George Baker; NEWCASTLE WEST, Mr. Henry Hird; WOLVERHAMPTON WEST, Mr. J. Simmons; CROYDON

(Continued in previous column)

Union Notes

Conference Rejects Delegate Plan

The Annual Conference of the National Union of Labour Organisers took place in London on 10th December. Despite adverse circumstances, there was a good turn up of members. The proceedings were marked by an excellent tone, a higher level of debate than usual, and a long agenda was despatched with commendable expedition.

The E.C.'s two reports were duly carried, as was also an alteration to rule which will have the effect of reducing the size of the E.C., who, in future, will elect their own chairman and vice-chairman.

Good Debate

Other proposed alterations to rules led to good-humoured debate, but though Yorkshire secured a good vote for its proposal to convert the conference into a delegate body this was lost, as were other proposals.

The Conference unanimously accepted the E.C.'s report of the transfer of the *Labour Organiser* to the Labour Party and also of the steps taken to fill the secretaryship on the retirement of Mr. H. Drinkwater.

New Office-Bearers

The election of officers resulted as follows:—President, Mr. R. Montford, J.P., C.C.; chairman, Mr. Claude Denscombe; vice-chairman, Mr. F. T. Watson; secretary, Mr. R. H. Ley; auditors, Mr. C. C. Jones and Ald. C. W. Luker. Mr. R. H. Ley was given a welcome to his new office by the chairman and by the Conference and suitably responded. His suggestion that Mr. Drinkwater be asked to retain office as an Adviser to the Union was unanimously adopted by the Conference.

The Presentation

In the evening a gathering of members and friends took place at Camberwell Town Hall at the invitation of Coun. J. H. Round, Mayor of Camberwell. At this "At Home" a presenta-

tion was made to Mr. H. Drinkwater on his retirement after nearly 25 years of office. Due to the kindly hospitality of our colleague the Mayor, and also to Mrs. Round, the Mayoress, a jolly time was spent by all.

Replies to Correspondents

The Ballot is Very Secret

Question.—A Petty Officer in the Navy writes: "We have had a discussion on elections and I have a bet on (£1 to the Red Cross) with my chief opponent, that the ballot is not so secret and that votes of electors can be discovered and known by those handling the election. Am I right?"

Answer.—No—you are in error. The safeguards at the poll and count are very rigid and are designed to prevent anyone tracking individual ballot papers. The ballot is secret and in no court or proceedings, however serious, can a person be required to disclose how or for whom he voted. At the close of the poll, the slot of the locked and sealed ballot box is closed and sealed. All the counterfoils of the ballot papers are put in packages and sealed. At the count each sealed ballot box in turn is opened by officials in the presence of agents of the candidates who jealously watch that there is no funny business, and the papers are rapidly totalled for tally with the total of electors voting at that station. The ballot papers from all the boxes are forthwith indiscriminately mixed up, and batches are handed to the official counters to sort face upwards into piles for the respective candidates, under the watchfulness of the agents of the candidates.

In the case of the postal votes, after the identity form has been

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"Be Yourself" When Speaking

(Continued from page 7)

remedy is to take thought and resolve that gestures shall be kept within bounds. A little mental discipline and control will become automatic and salutary on the emergence of feeling or stress.

Letting Yourself Go

Give attention to this matter of gesture. If you are of a phlegmatic temperament, don't hesitate on occasion to stimulate a feeling "to let yourself go"; prompt yourself to vary the set expression of your face by a sparkle of the countenance; encourage yourself to make simple natural gestures of the hands to emphasise a point.

These same remarks apply to those who, while not phlegmatic in temperament, have a disposition to be continuously serious and earnest on the platform.

What is the object of the above advice? It is to help you to avoid an effect of monotony on your audience. So to speak, there must be a little light and shade or there will be flatness.

Rampaging

Turning now to the other type of speaker, who is of an emotional or excitable type, the main necessity is to put a brake on extravagances of expression, whether it be a tendency to gabble or shout or to gesticulate in a crude or overwrought way. A little rampage may waken up an audience, but continuous rampaging becomes very wearisome to an audience. There are times when a speaker knows his speech so well that he feels he will be all right on the platform.

No Contortions

That is an occasion when the speaker can awarely watch himself as to gestures; he can restrain himself without losing effect; he can discern his tendency to faults and, indeed, partially arrest or correct some of them as he goes along. A few watchful experiments of this kind will discipline the brain so that it will act subconsciously in keeping order among the emotional reflexes. Gestures will then be natural accompaniments of speech and not a series of attendant physical contortions of the face or acrobatics of the limbs. This last

sentence is not an exaggeration. To see a silent film of an over-vehement speaker is to realise what a freakish and crude exhibition extravagant and undisciplined gesture can be to an audience.

(To be continued)

The Ballot is Very Secret

(Continued from Page 12)

checked, the plain sealed ballot envelopes are in turn opened by the R.O. who, without allowing the agents or officials present to see the number, compares the minute number on the back of the folded ballot paper with the number on the envelope. He then puts the folded ballot paper into a sealed ballot box for the count.

After the declaration, all papers are sealed up and sent to the Court of Chancery where, after an interval, they are destroyed.

Answer. (S.L.)—Your prospective parliamentary candidate must not allow his individual membership to lapse even though he has no settled residence at present. He can maintain I.M. through the local party where his Identity Card address places his parliamentary registration or through the local party, where he was registered for the local government vote in 1939. His affiliated membership does not continue entitlement to be a prospective candidate.

AROUND THE PARTIES

(Continued from Page 6)

GRAND TOTAL

"The meeting paid its own expenses by the sale of tickets, 1,500 at 1/- and 2/6, and we raised a total collection of £172. This, with the £135 we raised from our bazaar a fortnight ago, gives us a nice start with our Election Fund."

The above extract is from a letter from the Kingston Divisional Labour Party. Members are really putting their backs into work of all kinds, particularly membership recruitment.

Best wishes, Kingston, and may you go from strength to strength in 1945.

All Would-be M.P.s Should Read This

SIX "DON'TS" WHEN FACING A SELECTION COMMITTEE

By JACK CUTTER

This is the mating season for candidates and constituencies. About 100 Selection Conferences are in prospect as I write, with about 100 more to come. Assuming an average of four nominees per constituency, we reach the estimate that 800 persons will shortly be sitting in 200 ante-rooms, eyeing each other cagily and making heavy weather of light conversation while they await the signal which indicates that their zero hour has come and it is their turn to bale out into the hall next door and face the D.L.P. delegates who, disguised for the occasion as hard-boiled psycho-analysts, are thoroughly enjoying themselves.

The existence of this gallant 800 provides me with an excuse to offer them a few negative tips from one who has lost count of the number of Selection Conferences he has attended, yet whose amazement at the capacity of nominees for pulling boners is being constantly renewed.

Common Mistakes

It would be easy to write a fair-sized volume on the subject, entitled "Pitfalls for Potential Politicians" or "Don'ts for Dialectical Debutants." But we have space for the briefest mention of a few of the most common mistakes to avoid.

Don't dwell on your age. If you are very young the delegates are capable of observing the fact for themselves, and, without supporting qualifications, it is not the recommendation it is cracked up to be. If you are not so young as you would like to be, don't broadcast the circumstance.

Money Factor

If you are able to give a measure of financial assistance in the election expenses, don't blurt this out as one of the reasons why you should be selected. If you are not in a position to offer

any such assistance, don't be afraid to say so frankly, but only if a question on the subject is asked. All matters relating to financial contributions should be discussed with the proper committee, which is the Executive and not the General Committee.

In answering questions, always answer according to your own honest convictions. Never answer otherwise because you think that answer would be more acceptable to the delegates. Your estimation of what is acceptable to them is probably wrong and, in any case, they are quick to discern insincerity.

Don't overwork the first personal pronoun. Tell them something about yourself by all means, especially if you are a stranger to the constituency, when they will want to hear something about your record and background. But never use more than a third of your available time on that fascinating subject and, if you can deal with it adequately in less than that, do so.

Don't Get Riled

Never show annoyance, no matter how exasperated you feel. If some smart Alick delegate asks a question designed to show how profound is his own knowledge and how scanty your own, it is up to you how to deal with him, but you would be wise to avoid trying to take a rise out of him or making a joke at his expense, however tempted you are to do so.

Remember, finally, that, if the occasion and decision is important to you, it is equally important to them. Don't talk down to them and never adopt an air of superiority or boredom. Probably there are among the delegates men and women who are quite as able in their own way as you are. On the other hand, never apologise for yourself. Probably they won't accept you at your own valuation if it is a high one, but they certainly will if it is a low one.

Terms of New Bill

LOCAL ELECTIONS THIS YEAR

The Representation of the People Bill, 1944, had its second reading on December 19th. The following is a digest of its main parts:—

I. FRANCHISE

Extends the class of Local Government electors to include any persons who have qualification as Parliamentary electors, on account of residence or business premises. Peers, not having the Parliamentary entitlement, are included for residence or business premises qualification.

Abolishes the "husband or wife" qualification.

Extends the franchise to include U.K. members of the Forces which were raised elsewhere than in the United Kingdom or a Dominion.

II. RESUMPTION OF LOCAL ELECTIONS

Provides for the retirement of Councillors as follows:—

County and Municipal Boroughs	...	Nov. 1st, 1945
Metropolitan Boroughs	...	Nov. 1st, 1945
County Councils	...	Mar. 8th, 1946
District and Parish Councils	...	Apr. 15th, 1946

Ordinary elections will take place for the election to the whole of the Council seats, except in the case of County and Municipal Boroughs, and certain District Councils, where one-third of the councillors are due to retire, namely, those elected in 1936 in boroughs and those elected in 1937 in districts, and including any councillor elected to take their places, up to 1939. There is also a provision that co-opted councillors shall also retire. (This may mean in some cases that nearly half of the councillors will retire.)

Provides for Aldermanic elections at annual meetings of the Councils. County, 1946, Boroughs, 1945.

Qualification for election and for holding office, in the case of certain members of Local Authorities, whose original entitlement lapses on this Bill becoming an Act, is provided.

Stipulates no election of Elective Auditors until 1946.

III. TEMPORARY PROVISIONS AS TO REGISTRATION

FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The "Annual Register" to be in force from October 15 in each year.

FOR PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Year 1945

A "May, 1945, Register" to be in force from May 7 to September 30.

An "Annual Register" to be in force from October 1 to December 31.

Subsequent Years

A "1943 Act Register." This procedure to be in effect from January 1 to September 9.

The "Annual Register" to be in force from September 10 to December 31.

The "Annual Register" includes Parliamentary and Local Government electors. It is in force from October 15th for the full twelve months in respect of local elections, but only from October 15 to December 31 for Parliamentary elections.

The lists for the Annual Register will be published not later than the end of August.

The "May, 1945, Register" will be prepared on the procedure of the 1943 Act as if a general election had been initiated on March 1st, thus making the qualifying date January 31st. In the case of a prior dissolution of Parliament the procedure of the 1943 Act would ordinarily operate.

(Note that all the Registers are prepared on the relevant basis of the 1943 Act as amended by the 1944 Act, that is, they are "frozen" from the continuing registration records at particular and appropriate times.)

DETERMINING DATE FOR GENERAL RE-DISTRIBUTION

The day appointed whereby each Boundary Commission shall proceed to review all the constituencies in its respective area shall be October 15, 1946, or if the Secretary of State by order so directs, the next preceding or next succeeding fifteenth day of October.

Labour Party Publication List

Leaflet No. 12.—Workmen's Compensation

Price, carriage paid: 8/- per 1,000 copies

„ No. 10.—Your Victory—Membership Leaflet.

„ No. 11.—A Friend Knocks at Your Door.

„ No. 13.—A Word to the Trade Unionist.

Price, carriage paid: 17/6 per 1,000 copies.

PAMPHLETS:

“Labour Looks Ahead!” Post free: 1 copy 2d., 10 gd., 100 6/-.

“Build Your Own Future.” Post free: 1 copy 2d., 12 10d., 100 6/-.

“Labour, the War, and the Peace.” Post free: 1 copy 2d., 10 gd., 100 7/-.

“The Colonial Empire.”

“India—What Now and What Next?” by Geo. Ridley, M.P.

“Labour's Fight For the Old Folk.”

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“Future of Local Government.”

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“Full Employment and Financial Policy.”

“Guide to War Pensions Allowances and Grants.”

Post free: 1 copy 3d., 12 1/6, 100 12/-.

“The Railways—Retrospect and Prospect,” by Geo. Ridley, M.P.

“Coal,” by James Griffiths, M.P.

Post free: 1 copy 3d., 10 1/6, 100 14/-.

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Post free: 1 copy 4d., 12 2/6, 50 8/-, 100 15/-.

“Coal and Power.”

“Post-War Organisation of British Transport.”

Post free: 1 copy 4d., 12 2/6, 50 8/-, 100 15/-.

“The Colonies.” Post free: 1 copy 4d., 12 2/6, 50 10/-, 100 17/6.

“Wings for Peace.”

“Your Home—Planned by Labour.” Post free: 1 copy 4d., 12 2/9, 100 £1 1s.

“Your Future.” Post free: 1 copy 5d., 12 3/6, 100 £1 8s.

“Rent Acts Guide.” Post free: 1 copy 7½d., 6 3/-, 12 5/6.

“Leon Blum Before his Judges.” Post free: 1 copy 1/4, 12 10/-, 50 £2, 100 £3 10s.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES:

Pamphlets and Leaflets—Annual Conference Report (as issued) 5/- per year, post free.

The Labour Press Service (issued fortnightly) 5/- per year, post free.

Notes for Speakers (issued weekly) 10/- per year, post free.

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